

CHAPTER XVIII

ROOSEVELT AND ROYALTIES

ROOSEVELT'S estimates of royal rulers and their functions are set forth in the foregoing narrative of his experiences in various courts of Europe on his journey from Khartoum to London. That he had no desire to become one of them he expressed with characteristic vigor in a letter that he wrote to his friend Charles GK Washburn of Worcester, Mass., on March 5, 1913: "You are quite right about my preferring a beetle to a throne; that is, if you use the word * beetle' as including a field mouse or a weasel. I would not say this aloud, because I have been -awfully well treated by kings; but in modern days a king's business is not a man's job. H/e is kept as a kind of national pet, treated with consid-eration and distinction, but not allowed to have any gay in the running of the affairs of the national household." His impatience with the ceremonies and etiquette of courts found somewhat more vigorous expression when he ex-claimed after describing his experiences with potentates of various kingdoms at the funeral of King Edward: "I felt if I met another king I should bite him!" Speaking of a ruler of a particularly petty kingdom, whose fussy anxiety about his prerogatives and the precedence to which he was entitled had both amused and irritated him, he said, drawing upon his bird lore for a simile: "Ho is nothing but a twittering wagtail.?"

It was only the pettiest of the royalties who caused him this irritation. With the chief rulers of Europe, while tak-

ing unenvying view of their powers, he was
on friendly
terms both during and after his Presidency.
This was espe-
cially the case with King Edward of England,
as the corre-
spondence between them shows. "With the
Kaiser, in spite